



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

This is an official  
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) **Advisory**

**MESSAGE ID:** MSHAN-20160330-00117-**ADV (Health Advisory)**

**RECIPIENTS:** All Physicians, Infection Control, Hospitals, and ERs – Statewide

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 30, 2016

**SUBJECT:** *Zika Virus: Guidance for Travelers, Pregnancy Planning and Prevention of Sexual Transmission, and Recommendations for Testing*

Dear Colleagues,

This Health Alert Network Message is being issued to provide updated information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) including: recommendations for persons planning travel to areas with active Zika virus transmission, counseling for patients about pregnancy planning, the prevention of sexual transmission of Zika, and recommendations for testing and reporting. The guidance is summarized below.

**Counseling for travelers to affected areas**

**Before travel**

- **Pregnant women, or women planning to get pregnant, should not travel to affected countries or areas;**
- Anyone (both men and women) traveling to an affected area should strictly follow steps to prevent mosquito exposures during the trip (<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/avoid-bug-bites>);
- If pregnant women or women planning to get pregnant must travel, they are encouraged to talk to their obstetrician first, and strictly follow steps to avoid mosquito exposures during the trip.

**After return**

- To prevent spreading Zika virus to local mosquitoes, all returning travelers should take every measure possible to avoid mosquitoes for the 3 weeks after returning to Mississippi.
  - Stay indoors as much as possible.
  - If they do go outside for any length of time, use DEET containing mosquito repellent and wear long sleeves if possible.
  - See <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/avoid-bug-bites> for additional information regarding mosquito repellents and avoiding mosquito exposures
- **Returning travelers should not donate blood for at least 4 weeks after return from an affected country.**

## **Counseling for pregnancy planning and prevention of sexual transmission**

- Women with possible Zika virus exposure (travel to areas with active disease transmission or exposure through sexual contact), **or** women who have been diagnosed with Zika virus infection, should wait at **least 8 weeks** after last exposure or **at least 8 weeks** after onset of symptoms before attempting conception.
- Men who have traveled to an area with active Zika virus transmission but did not develop symptoms of Zika virus disease should wait **at least 8 weeks** after last exposure before attempting conception and should use condoms or abstain from sex during that timeframe.
- Men who have been diagnosed with Zika virus infection should **wait at least 6 months** after the onset of symptoms to attempt conception and should use condoms or abstain from sex during that timeframe.
- Men who have traveled to areas with active Zika virus transmission, with pregnant sex partners, should abstain from sex **for the duration of the pregnancy** or should use condoms correctly and consistently for the entire pregnancy.

## **Testing Recommendations**

**Testing is recommended for persons with a history of travel to an area with Zika virus transmission who are in one of the following categories:**

- Have one or more symptoms consistent with infection (documented fever, maculopapular rash, arthralgia, or conjunctivitis) during or within 2 weeks of travel (or exposure), **or**
- Any asymptomatic pregnant woman, between 2-12 weeks after return from travel.

Zika testing is available at the Mississippi Public Health Laboratory. For patients meeting the above criteria, please contact the Mississippi State Department of Health Office of Epidemiology at (601) 576-7725 to arrange for Zika virus testing.

## **Reporting**

Please call the MSDH Office of Epidemiology at 601-576-7725 (601-576-7400 after hours, weekends and holidays):

- To report suspected Zika virus disease in returning travelers, and
- To arrange for testing of both symptomatic travelers and asymptomatic pregnant women.

## **Additional information is available at the following links:**

- Symptoms of Zika virus infection <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/symptoms/index.html>
- Countries and Territories with active with Zika virus transmission <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/geo/active-countries.html>

- Information for Health Care Providers <http://www.cdc.gov/zika/hc-providers/index.html>
- Update: Interim Guidance for Health Care Providers Caring for Women of Reproductive Age with Possible Zika Virus Exposure — United States, 2016  
[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6512e2er.htm?s\\_cid=mm6512e2er\\_w](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6512e2er.htm?s_cid=mm6512e2er_w)
- Update: Interim Guidance for Prevention of Sexual Transmission of Zika Virus — United States, 2016  
[http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6512e3er.htm?s\\_cid=mm6512e3er\\_w#B1\\_down](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6512e3er.htm?s_cid=mm6512e3er_w#B1_down)
- [The Mississippi State Department of Health website www.healthymississippi.com/zika](http://www.healthymississippi.com/zika)

## *Alerting Message Specification Settings*

<b>Originating Agency:</b>	Mississippi State Department of Health
<b>Alerting Program:</b>	MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)
<b>Message Identifier:</b>	MSHAN-20160330-00117-ADV
<b>Program (HAN) Type:</b>	Health Advisory
<b>Status (Type):</b>	Actual ()
<b>Message Type:</b>	Alert
<b>Reference:</b>	MSHAN-00117
<b>Severity:</b>	Unknown
<b>Acknowledgement:</b>	No
<b>Sensitive:</b>	Not Sensitive
<b>Message Expiration:</b>	Undetermined
<b>Urgency:</b>	Undetermined
<b>Delivery Time:</b>	600 minutes

## *Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings*

<b>Originating Agency:</b>	A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.
<b>Alerting Program:</b>	The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.
<b>Message Identifier:</b>	A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT ( <b>ALT=Health Alert</b> , <b>ADV=Health Advisory</b> , <b>UPD=Health Update</b> , <b>MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service</b> )).
<b>Program (HAN) Type:</b>	Categories of Health Alert Messages.
<b>Health Alert:</b>	Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
<b>Health Advisory:</b>	Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
<b>Health Update:</b>	Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.
<b>Health Info Service:</b>	Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.
<b>Status (Type):</b>	
Actual:	Communication or alert refers to a live event
Exercise:	Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
Test:	Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded
<b>Message Type:</b>	
Alert:	Indicates an original Alert
Update:	Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded
Cancel:	Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
Error:	Indicates prior alert has been retracted

**Reference:** For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

**Severity:**

Extreme:	Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe:	Significant threat to life or property
Moderate:	Possible threat to life or property
Minor:	Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown:	Unknown threat to life or property

**Acknowledgement:** Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

**Sensitive:**

Sensitive:	Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive:	Indicates non-sensitive content

**Message Expiration:** Undetermined.

**Urgency:** Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

**Delivery Time:** Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).